THE GUIDE

IQBAL'S "KHIZR-E-RAAH"

Rendered into
English by :

TARIQ and AZIZ

Pan-Islamic Publications
...nal House, 47 The Mall, Lahore.

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"The mystic and the common man alike,
Have been revived with my Voice !
It is I who has given them
The Courage to devour the Flames !"

—IQBAL

Foreword

IT is needless to mention here the educative, constructive, and revolutionary values of Iqbal's Poetry. Whatever this great Sage and Philosopher of the East gave us in his Persian and Urdu Poetry, is highly inspiring, enlightening and spirit-reviving. These elements of his teachings can be remarkably seen in "Khizr-e-Rah". In this dynamic and distinguished Poem he provides us with a remedy for the spiritual, moral, and social maladies of this age. It is a very comprehensive Poem which clearly and precisely solves the current problems of the present Muslim Society. Now, we are giving the Readers a poetic translation of the same and have tried our best to convey the Poet's original sense and points of view. We haven't given "Rhymes" in our Translation, for it is an admitted fact that they become a great obstacle in the expression of true meanings. Of course, we intend to continue this service of conveying in English the teachings of Iqbal, which is undoubtedly a great service to the Islamic World in particular, and to the oppressed and suffering Humanity in general. Therefore, English translation of some other distinguished works of Iqbal will follow in the near future, for we have a firm confidence in Allah and in the sacred nature of our mission.

Abdur-Rahman Tariq
Aziz Ahmad Sheikh

"*To be sure a single beautiful Line has wrought the World more good than all the masterpieces of Mechanism !*"

—Anatole France

THE POET

1. One night by the river-bank,
In my contemplations, I was hiding
A world of Sentiments restless,
In the corner of my Heart !

2. The Night was quiet,
The Air was light,
And the River was flowing softly :
Whether it was a River,
Or a Picture of the River ? -
My vision was bewildered !

3. As the sucking Babe
Goes to sleep in the Cradle,
So was resting the restless wave,
In the abyss of the River !

4. The bewitching Night
Had ensnared the Birds
Into their nests,
And the charming Moon
Had captured the twinkling Stars !

5. Behold ! What I see !
The world-wandering Khizr,[1]
Whose old age,
Like the Dawn,
Is tinged with the radiance
Of Youth ; — *him* I see !

6. Says he to me :
"O Seeker of the Secrets Divine !
If ye ope thine eyes
Of the slumbering heart,
It will reveal to thee
The Fate of the World ! "

7. As soon as I heard these words
An uproaring Tumult
Arose in my heart :
Dying in search of Truth
As I was, I exclaimed :

8. "O Khizr ! Whose all-seeing Eye
Sees all the Storms
That still lie asleep
In the bed of the River !

9. "The boat of the poor ! "
"The innocent child ! "
And the "wall of the orphans ! "[2]
To hear the Philosophy of these
secrets
Even the knowledge of Moses
Was bewildered and amazed before
thee !

10. Leaving the Inhabitation behind,
Ye wander about the Desert,
And thy life is heedless
Of Day and Night,
Yesterday and To-morrow ! [3]

11. Oh, let me know please :
What is the secret of Life ?
What is "Sovereignty" ?
And what is this conflict
Between Labour and Capital ?

12. The antique robe of Asia
Is being torn into pieces ;
And the youth of this age
Are blindly imitating
The culture of newly-arisen Powers !

13. Although Alexander remained thirsty
Of the life-giving Nectar,[4]
His nature is still busy
With its hot pursuits !

14. Lo ! the very Descendants
Of the Holy Prophet have become
His Honour-retailing Band ;
And Alas ! The tough Turk
Is besmeared with blood and sand ! [5]

15. Ah, there is Fire, the Descendants
Of Abraham, and Namrud ![6]
Is it that some-One[7]
Wishes to test someone again ? —
(O Prophet of Foreknowledge
Of the Future Events,
Answer please !)

THE REPLY OF KHIZR

16. "Why are ye amazed
At this desert-wandering of mine ?
These continuous rambles are
Of active life a great Sign !

17. O stay-at-home !
Ye haven't seen yet
The charming spectacle
When the Trumpet of March
Echoes and re-echoes
In the atmosphere of a Desert !

18. Ah, the careless jumping
Of a Deer on the mounds of sand,
And those Haults in the Desert,
Without bag and baggage ;
And the Journey overland,
Heedless of Distance and *Destination !*

19. Behold ! Is it a quick-silvery Star
At the Hour of Dawn
Shining afar ? —
Or, the illuminating forehead
of Gabriel,
Appearing from the roof of Heaven ?

20. Lo ! The sun-set in the solitude
Of the Desert-evening,
Which lent more Light of Divinity
To the world-seeing eye
Of Abraham ! [8]

21. And Lo ! The hault of Caravan
By a Fountain in the Desert
As the Believers gather togather
Around the fountain Salsabeel[9]
In Paradise !

22. The craze of Love always
In search of new wilderness remains ;
And thine farms and gardens
Have become thy chains
Amidst the Population !

23. As a matter of fact, the Cup of Life
Is more durable
By its constant rotation !
And O ignorant ! This is
The Secret of Eternal Life !

LIFE

24. Life is above the risk of
Loss and gain, I tell thee,
And Life is, sometimes,
The very soul, and sometimes,
The surrender of soul (to the Almighty !)

25. Oh, do not measure Life
With the scales of "To-day" and "To-morrow[10]" !
Everlasting, ever-revolving,
And ever *young* is Life !

26. Create a world of your own
If ye are amongst the *living* !
The secret of the creation
Of Adam, and the object
Of Divine Order : "*Be* !"[11]
And then "It *was* !"—is Life !

27 Ask the reality of Life
Of the Mount-breaker[12] :
A stream of milk[13],
An axe, and a hard granite, is Life !

28. Ah, in Bondage it exhausts
Into a shallow stream ;
But in Liberty it exalts,
For a boundless Ocean, is Life !

29. It is manifest and sublime
By its captivating powers,
Although hidden in a mortal
Earthly structure, is Life !

30. Like a Bubble ye have arisen
From the Ocean of Life,
And in this "House of Loss[14]"
Your real test, is Life !

31. So long as you are *immature*
You are nothing but a heap of Dust ;
But when you are *mature*,
You become an all-conquering
Sword !

32. A Heart desirous of dying
For the sake of *Truth*,
Should in the first place,
Incorporate Courage and Zeal
In its earthly mould !

33. It should be able to burn away
This borrowed Earth and Heaven,
And from their cold ashes,
Should create a world of its *own* !

34. It should reveal
The hidden Powers of Life,
So that this insignificant Spark
May kindle an immortal Light[15] !

35. It should shine like Sun
Over the Eastern Land, so that
Badakhshan[16] may produce
Its old rich Rubies again !

36. It should send the Messenger
Of nightly lamentations[17]
Towards the Heaven, and thus
Create the understanders
Of its holy Secrets
Amidst the Stars of Night !

37. Oh, this is Doomsday and ye stand
In the Court of Justice !
Therefore, present O Forgetful !
If ye have any good deeds
In the Store of thy Actions !

SOVEREIGNTY

38. Now come, I tell thee the meaning
Of the Verse : "Innal-muluk[18]",—
Sovereignty is a magical work
Of the Ruling Nations !

39. If the Subject ever awakens
From his sleep for a moment only,
The magic of the Ruler,
Again lulls him to Sleep !

40. By the effect of the sorcery
That Mahmood[19] does practise
On the eyes of slave Ayaz[20],
He finds the chain in his neck,
An instrument of Pleasure !

41. At last, the blood of Israelites
Boils against the tricks of enchantment,
And some Moses
Breaks the spell of Samiri[21] !

42. Mastery suits alone
That peerless Person in Heaven,
And the real Ruler is only *He* !
The rest are mere idols
Raised by Azar[22] on earth !

43. O, bring not shame and ridicule
To thy libertine nature,
By accepting constant slavery !
So long as ye carve out "Lords" [23]
Ye are an infidel,
Worse than the Brahmins !

44. The Western Democracy
Is the same old Instrument
From whose chords proceeds
No voice save that of "Imperialism!"

45. It is the Monster of *Aggression*
Masquerading in the garb of
"Democracy"
And O fool ! ye take him to be
The Fairy of Freedom !

46. The Legislature ! The Reforms !
The Grants and Concessions !
The protection of Human Rights !—
These recipes of the Western Pharmacopoeia
Are sweet to taste, no doubt,
But in effect, they bring
An endless Sleep !

47. God save us
From the firy speeches
Of the Legislators !
This is also a battle
Of the Capitalist supremacy !

48. Ye believe this mirage
Of colour and fragrance
To be a garden of Roses !
Alas ! O ignorant !
Ye have mistaken
The cage for thy Nest !

49. Take to the Labourer
This message of mine,—
Message not only of Khizr
But of the whole Universe!

50. O poor creature !
Who has been ruined
By the cheating Capitalist !
For centuries together
You have been passing your life
In misery and torture !

51. Ah, the wealth-producing hands
Of the Labourer,
Have been paid the wages,
As the rich give alms
To the poor, in charity !

52. The Wizard of Almoot[24]
Gave ye the leaf of hemp ;
And ye took it to be
A piece of sugar-candy !

53. The Race, the Nationality,
The Church, the Sovereignty,
The Culture and the Colour !
Oh ! Capitalism has made
How nice choice intoxicants !

54. O ignorant ! You sacrifice your life
For these imaginary gods,
And in this trance,
They robbed you
Of your wealth of Life !

55. Oh, the Capitalist has won
Each and every thing
By his mean tacts and tricks,
And the Labourer has been defeated
By his extreme simplicity !

56. Arise ! The World has taken now
To a new way of Life[25],
And in the East and the West,
Begins your Era of Prosperity !

57. High courage doesn't accept
Even the bounties of River ;
Then O ignorant ! How long
Will ye keep the dew-drops
In thy skirt, like the Bud ?

58. The Song[26], which awakens the
Masses,
Is a perpetual source of Pleasure :
So how long will ye tell us
The dreamy-sleepy Tale
Of Alexander and Jamshed[27] ?

59. A new Sun has been born
From the womb of the World[28] !
O Sky ! How long shall ye mourn
For the vanquished Stars ?

60. The human nature has shattered
All its chains of Sorrows !
How long could weep
The eyes of Adam
Over the loss of Paradise[29] ?

61. The Spring says
To the helpful Gardener :
How long shall ye search salves
For the wounds of Roses ?

62. O foolish Glow-worn !
Get rid of revolving
Around the Lamp,
And live in the illumination
Of thy *own* Nature !

THE WORLD OF ISLAM

63. What are ye telling me ?
The tales of Turks and Arabs ?—
Nothing is hidden from me,
Of the Joys and Sorrows
Of Mussalmans !

64. The children of the Cross[30]
Took away the inheritance
Of Khalil[31], and the dust of Hedjaz
Has been transformed into bricks
For the foundation of Church !

65. The red cap[32] has become
Infamous in the World,
And those who were proud
Of their power and possessions,
Have now fallen
To the mercy of others !

66. Persia is taking from
The Wine-sellers of England,
That haughty and headstrong Wine,
Whose glow and heat
Melts the very Decanter !

67. The Western Diplomacy
Has brought our Nation
To such a state of disunity
As the Scissors cut
The gold into pieces !

68. Ah, the blood of a Muslim
Has become cheap like water,
And you are restless, because
Your heart cannot understand
The Secret of his Fate !

69. Thus said Rumi[33] :
"Every old Building
Which is reconstructed,
They first destroy (don't you know?)
Its old foundations !"

70. The Nation's eyes opened
As the Home-land slipped
From its shivering hands !
O forgetful ! Look into the depth
Of this Event,
For God has granted thee
A keen insight !

71. O broken Twig !
Better remain as ye are,
Than begging balm of others !
O helpless Ant !
Don't beg thy needs
Of the great king Solomon !

72. In the organization and union of the Muslims
Lies the salvation of the East !
And Alas ! The Asians are still
Unaware of this anecdote !

73. O Muslim ! Forsake the "Politics"[34]
And enter the Fort of Faith once again,
For Sovereignty and Wealth
Are only a Reward
For protecting the Honour
Of the Sanctuary[35] !

74. From the banks of the Nile
To the soil of Kashghar
The Muslims should be united
For the protection of their Sanctuary[36] !

75. Whosoever will observe
The distinctions of Colour and Blood,[37]
Shall perish immediately,
Whether it be the prosperous Turk,
Or an Arab of high Pedigree !

76. If "Race" takes preference
Over "Religion"[38] among the
Muslims,
They shall be blown off
From this world,
Like the dust of the Path !

77. Go ! Search somewhere
And bring the Heart and the Soul
Of thy great Ancestors ;
So that ye may once again,
In this world, raise the Foundation
Of the long-forgotten Caliphate[39] !

78. O, who doesn't understand
The concealed Polytheism[40] !
Beware of the manifest, at least !
O enraptured by the names of
Abu Bakr and Ali, Beware !

79. Lamentation was a binding
For Love : and that too is over !
Now hold thy heart for a while
And wait for the effect
Of my Lamentation !

80. Ye have seen the reckless rise
And the high flow of the River[41] :
Now wait to see
How its restless Waves[42]
Turn into chains (to overpower the River).

81. The Dream of Liberty
That Islam had visualized
So frequently in the Past :
O Muslims ! To-day see
The true interpretation of the same !

82. The very ashes of Salamander[43] are
A source of re-incarnation to him !
Look ! This old Universe
Takes its rebirth
After dying out !

83. Oh ! open thine eyes and see
A Picture—a faint Picutre of the coming Era,
In the Mirror of my Speech !

84. Still there is another
Tried trick with the Heaven !
Witness the failure of worldly plans
Before the strength of Fate !

85. Never forget that you are a Muslim !
Keep your breast brimmed
With *healthy* longings ; and
Always remember this holy Verse :
"God does not break
His Promise (with true Believers" !)

THE END

NOTES

I, The spiritual guide and the main Figure in this Poem is Khizr (Khadir) of whom the Poet asks certain questions about the Religious, Political, and Social problems of his time, viz. why do you remain off the population, and wander all alone in the desert ?—What is the secret of Life ?—What is Sovereignty ?—What is this conflict between the Capitalist and the labourer ?—Why this disunion and confusion in the world of Islam ? And then khizr answers his questions in very comprehensive and pathetic words, which the Readers will think over in this translation. Khizr is believed to be immortal, and endowed with divine knowledge, for the Holy Quran says about him :

> "Then they[1] found one of our servants whom We had granted Mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from ourselves." (18 : 65)

It was *this* Divine Knowledge, which Moses was seeking so enthusiastically, and was consequently benefited by the same.

Keeping in view the same tradition, and the same characteristics of Khizr, Iqbal also wants to be enlightened by his knowledge, and asks him the above-mentioned questions !

2. The complete story about these three incidents is related in the Holy Quran, as fellows :

> "Then they found one of our servants, whom We had granted Mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from ourselves. Moses said to him : "May I follow you that you may teach me of the good

1. *i.e.*, Moses and his Companion.

(knowledge) that you have been taught ?" He said : "You cannot have patience with me. And how can you have patience in those matters, whereof you have not a comprehensive knowledge ?" Moses said : "If Allah please, you will find me patient, nor shall I disobey you on any subject." He said : "If you want to follow me, do not question me about ought, until I *myself* speak to you about it."

So they set out until, when they embarked in a boat, he made a hole in it. Moses said : "Have you made a hole in it to drown its occupants ?—You have surely done a grievous thing !" He said : "Did I not say that you could not have patience with me ?" He said "Blame me not for what I forgot, and be not hard upon me for what I did."

So they went on, until, when they met a boy, he slew him. Moses said : "Have you slain an *innocent* person, not guilty of slaying another ? You have indeed done a horrible thing !" He said : "Did I not say to you that you could not have patience with me ?" He said : "If I ask you about anything after this, do not keep company with me. You will then indeed have found an excuse in my case !"

So they went on, until, when they came to the people of a town, they asked its people for food, but they refused to entartain them as guests. Then they found in it a wall, which was on the point of falling, so he put it into a right state. Moses said : "If you had wished, you could have taken a recompense[1] for it !" He said : "This is the parting between me and thee. Now I will inform thee of the significance of that with which thou could not have patience :

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1. To meet the expenses of our food, for we are so hungry!

(1) As for the *boat*, it belonged to poor people working on the river, and I intended to damage it, for there was hehind them a king, who seized every boat by force !

(2) And as for the *boy* his parents were true Believers and we feared lest he should involve them in wrongdoing and disbelief. Therefore, we intended that their Lord might give them in his place one better (son) in purity, and nearer to His mercy !

(3) And as for the *wall*, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them, and their father had been a righteous man. So thy lord intended that they should attain their maturity, and take out their treasure (a mercy from thy Lord), and I did not do it of my *own* accord. This is the significance of all that with which you could not have patience !" (18 : 65—82)

3. That is, the limits of Time.

4. It is told that Alexander was continuously in search of Nectar, but he could not find it. By having this water, he wanted to be immortal, to conquer the whole world !

5. Because at that time Turks were fighting against the hostile Powers and due to the shortage of war material and man-power, they suffered heavily, yet by their unfailing courage, self-confidence, and martial spirit, they ultimately won the victory.

6. The Holy Quran says that when Abraham detested and condemned idol-worshipping, the infidels kindled a big pit of fire, and threw Abraham into it to punish him, but by the Commandment of Allah the fire became harmless for him : "We said : O Fire ! Be coolness and peaceful for Abraham ! "

(21 : 69)

Namrud was a pagan and tyrant Ruler of that period, who had ordered for the chastisement of Abraham.

7. That is, Allah.

8. It is stated in the Holy Quran that in his vast contemplation of the Universe, Abraham saw the Star, the Moon, and the Sun respectively, and as he was enchanted by their beauty and illumination, every time he took each of them to be his god; but consequently, when they faded out, he lost his faith in them, saying : "I do not love the setting ones. Surely I have turned myself, being upright, wholly to Him, who originated the Heavens and the Earth, and I am not one of the Polytheists."

(6 : 80)

Thus, he realized the Unity of God, and was blessed with more Divine Light to see the *reality* !

9. "Salsabeel" is the name of a Fountain in Paradise.

10. That is, with the measures of Time, of which "To-day"—"To-morrow" or "Yesterday" are mere terms for the worldly affairs and appointments to fulfil.

11. That is, the real object of the Divine Command : "Be !" was *Life*, which immediately became *active* in the Universe. "His command, when He intends to create anything, is only to say to it : "Be!"—and then it is !"

(36 : 82)

12. His name was Farhad, who was madly in love with Sheerin, the wife of Khusro Parvez, who had commanded Farhad to dig out a stream from "Koh-e-Besatun."

13. In the original couplet "Ju-e-Sheer" means a "stream of milk;" but how a stream of *milk* is possible in a mountain ? Although Persian and Urdu Poets have always mentioned "Ju-e-Sheer" on this occasion, yet it seems to be a metaphor for "sweet water."

14. By "House of Loss" is meant this world of ours, wherein every thing is doomed to *destruction*.

15. "Immortal Light" which is to be attained by improving the Spiritual and Moral qualities in man.

16. Badakhshan, including Wakhan, a province on the north-east frontier of Afghanistan, is particularly known for jewels and rubies.

17. According to some Verses of the Holy Quran, and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet, nightly prayers or lamentations are heard sooner by Allah !

18. The complete Verse runs as follows : "Surely the kings, when they enter a town, ruin it, and make the noblest of its people to be low and disgraced; and thus they do ! "

(27 : 33)

Thus, it clearly explains the *aggressive* and *tyrannical* attitude of the Sovereigns and the Dictators towards their subjects.

19. That is, Sultan Mahmood of Ghazna (971-1030) son of Sabuktagin Afghan conqueror.

20. Traditions say that Ayaz was exceedingly beautiful, and Mahmood Kept him as a sweetheart, yet there was no touch of passion in his love. In this verse, however, Ayaz represents *Slaves*.

21. Samiri was an idolater and a magician, who made a calf and induced the Israelites to worship it as their god; but later Moses burnt the caif and threw its ashes into the sea.

(See 20 : 97)

22. As it is mentioned in the Holy Quran (6 : 75) Azar was the name of Abraham's father, who was an idolater, and had so many earthly "gods" in his temple, to worship.

23. That is, aggressive Rulers, to subjugate free people.

24. "Almoot" is the name of a Fort between Qazwain and Geeian. By "Wizard of Almoot" is meant Hassan Bin Sabbah, who had built that Fort, the interior of which he decorated with fascinating things, and gathered together most beautiful girls of the Country in it. On the whole, he called it his "Paradise" and invited people in it through his disciples. To each of them he gave hemp, and when he became sober after the intoxication, he found himself in a wonderful garden beside a murmuring stream, surrounded by the "Hauris". Thus every visitor was completely enchanted by the spell of that Wizard, and became his disciple. Hassan Bin Sabbah was a contempory and a class - follow of Omar Khayyam, the famous Persian Poet and Astronomer.

25. That is, Democaacy; Republic.

26. *i.e.*, The song of *Liberty*.

27. In this line, by "Alexander" and "Jamshed" are meant Dictators and aggressive Rulers !

28. That is, the sun of complete Freedom for all peoples and Nations over the Globe. Now no Dictator or Emperor can deprive people of their natural right of *self-determination* !

29. When Adam was commanded by Allah to leave Paradise and to descend on earth, he wept for a long time, and asked pardon of Allah for his disobedience. Hence, this is an allusion to that event of history, and also to his Prayer :

> "Our Lord ! we have wronged ourselves; and if you will not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers." (7 : 23)

30. In this line, by "The Children of Cross" are meant the Christians.

31. The Arabic word "Khalil" literally means "Friend." Since Allah took Abraham for His Friend, due to his strong Faith, these words of the Poet obviously become an allusion to a Verse of the Holy Quran :

"And who is better in religion than he who submits himself entirely to Allah, while doing good (to others), and follows the Faith of Abraham, the *upright* one. And Allah took Abraham for a Friend" (4 : 125)

32. "Red Cap," which was worn by the Turks, and which unreasonably became "infamous" due to the false propaganda of their enemies, against them.

33. Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi (A. D. 1207—1273), the famous mystic Poet of Persia. The *theme* of his poetry is generally "Ishq" (Divine Love) which is frequently found in his well-known Mathnavi. Iqbal's heart and brain got a profound influence of his mysticism, and he is proud to call himself a "Pupil" of Rumi :

"Inspired by the genius of the Master of Rum,
I rehearse the sealed Book of the Secret Lore !
His Soul is the source of Flames,
And I am like the spark that gleams for a moment !
His burning candle consumed me, the Moth;
His wine overwhelmed my Goblet !
The Master of Rum transmutes my soil to Gold,
And clothes my barren dust with Beauty !"

34. *i.e.*, The Politics which is absolutely devoid of Religion and spiritual values. Iqbal strongly pleads for a complete unity and harmony of "Politics" and Religion, for this is the basic principle of a true *Islamic State.*

35. That is, a financially and politically strong State is the fruit of following the law of *Sharait* !

36. In this couplet Iqbal emphatically and effectively pleads for "Pan-Islamism." This he demands of the Muslims, just as the Holy Quran demands of them, for Revelation is the main source of his inspiration. Says the Holy Quran on a "Universal Brotherhood" of the Muslims :

"And hold fast by the Rope[1] of Allah all togethers, and be not disunited. And remember Allah's favour

1. That is, the Holy Quran.